

Public Comment Policy

Purpose

To establish standards to ensure a consistent, structured opportunity for persons to address the Timberland Regional Library (TRL) Board of Trustees on library-related matters or matters over which it has responsibility and authority in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (RCW 42.30).

Scope

The TRL Board of Trustees invites and welcomes audience participation during the public comment portion of a “regular” Board meeting agenda (RCW 42.30.240) and provides this opportunity for individuals to address the Board on library matters.

- Conduct, respect, courteous behavior, and language is expected of all participants. The Disruptive Patron Policy applies to behavior in Board of Trustee meetings, in both virtual and physical spaces.
- In the event that the Board deems the conduct of a speaker to be disruptive or disrespectful, the chairperson of the meeting may call the session to an end.
- Any person(s) judged by the Board and/or chairperson of the meeting to be causing undue disruption, or who does not follow the guidelines established by the Board, will be asked to leave the meeting. Refusal to leave the meeting may result in removal by local authorities or library administration.

Policy

Public comments may be made in person or virtually. Individuals wishing to address the Board during the public comment period may be asked to provide the following:

- Full name
- Contact information (written)/Location (in-person)
- Topic of the comment

During Public Comment:

- Three (3) minute time limit to speak.
- Each person is allowed to comment only once.
- Individuals will be invited to speak first if they signed up prior to the meeting, second in person, then virtual guests on a first-come first-served basis.
- Members of the public may submit their comments in writing at any time via regular mail or emailed 24 hours prior to the meeting, to one of the following:

USPS

Attn: Cheryl Heywood, Executive Director, Timberland Regional Library
415 Tumwater Blvd SW Tumwater, WA 98501

Email: librarydirector@trl.org

- Email comments containing links will not be considered.
- Comments will be directed to the Board as a whole, not to individual trustees.

- Comments will be related to agenda items and general library matters, excluding personnel issues.
- The Board does not engage in discussion or debate with speakers during the public comment period or business portion of its meetings, though they may ask clarifying questions.
- All comments are taken under advisement. There is no guarantee that suggestions brought forth by the public during public comment session will be addressed by the Board at a future meeting.

Comments in Public Hearings

- Comments during public hearings will be made at the appropriate time on the agenda set for that purpose.
- Comments are limited to the agenda topic of the public hearing.

Background

Meetings of the TRL Board of Trustees are open to the public.

The public is not normally invited to participate or contribute to discussion of business on the agenda except when invited to speak, make a presentation or in some way provide information to the Board.

Time will be reserved on the meeting agenda for public comment. The public comment period will normally be held at the beginning of the meeting. The public comment period may be limited at the discretion of the chairperson.

References

Open Public Meetings Act (RCW 42.30).

Effective 1/1/2025

Review Date 1/1/2030

Policy Number: 043

By the enactment of this policy the Board of Trustees of Timberland Regional Library is concurrently rescinding any prior policy or procedure within TRL that is either in conflict with or expansive of the matters addressed in this policy.